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FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
TO RUCLRFA/USDA FAS WASHDC
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 5495
INFO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 5698

UNCLAS MAPUTO 000868

SIPDIS

FOR USDA/FS/SANDRA FARBER

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAGR](#) [OTRA](#) [SF](#) [MZ](#)

SUBJ: COUNTRY CLEARANCE GRANTED FOR MICHAEL MCNAMARA TO
TRAVEL TO MOZAMBIQUE

REF: USDA FAS WASHDC 679073

¶1. Embassy Maputo welcomes and grants country clearance for US Forest Service, Hydrologist, Michael McNamara to travel to Mozambique from July 27, 2006 to August 8, 2006 to review source conditions, conduct field investigation, and author a watershed assessment of Banhine National Park, Mozambique. If possible, Post would like Mr. McNamara to call at the embassy to brief Acting DCM Wysham on his visit - either before or after going to Banhine National Park.

Please advise as soon as possible regarding any schedule or itinerary changes; refer to para 8 regarding visa requirements.

¶2. Control Officer:

Control officer for the visit will be the Acting Deputy Chief of Mission, John Wysham. He can be contacted at:

-- Office telephone: (258) 2149-27-97, ext.3441
-- Office fax: (258) 2149-35-74
-- Cellular: (258) 82-315-7170

¶3. Hotel Reservations:

Post understands that no assistance is needed at this time, however, if assistance is needed please advise as soon as possible.

¶4. Briefing by RSO on Security Situation:

Please see para 9 below. Foreigners have been crime targets recently. TDY visitors staying longer than two days must come to the Embassy for a security briefing from the Regional Security Office shortly after arrival. Guidance will include helpful do's and don'ts about walking around Maputo, dangerous areas in the city, use of taxis, etc.

¶5. Medical Services:

Maputo has limited medical facilities. Visitors will have to be medevaced in the event of a major injury or illness. In the past, we have had visitors nearly die because details of their medavac insurance were not readily available. Post is therefore very strict in not granting country clearance unless we are assured that the traveler is adequately covered if a medavac is required.

Direct Hire employees (not contractors) of the Department of State, USAID, Department of Defense, CDC,

and Peace Corps have country clearance and need not take any further action. Direct Hire employees of other U.S Government Agencies must provide their control officer by cable or e-mail a name and 24-hour point of contact for their agency that can authorize medical evacuation. Country Clearance is granted upon receipt of that information.

The USG does not cover contract employees for medevac. Therefore, all USG contractors (regardless of the government agency they are contracted to) must provide their control officer prior to arrival the name, phone number, and policy number of their medevac insurance provider(s) for use in case of emergency. Country clearance will not be granted to contractors without medevac insurance.

16. Consular Registration:

All TDY visitors spending more than two work days in Maputo are required to register with the Consular Section in the Chancery to ensure that the Mission has current emergency contact information for each visitor.

17. Financial Matters:

With the exception of the main hotels in Maputo, Mozambique is essentially a cash economy. Credit cards are of limited utility. Vendors will accept U.S. dollars (or South African rand) in lieu of the local currency, the metical. For a day trip to Maputo, we recommend visitors bring with them USD 100 in cash for spending money. Dollars can be exchanged at any bank or currency exchange facility. Embassy Maputo recommends against the use of travelers' checks, as

transaction charges are uniformly high. Please note that Embassy Maputo will need fiscal data in the event that extensive services or goods are required during the visit. There are no currency import/export restrictions in affect at this time. The American Express credit card is accepted by Mozambican Airlines (LAM).

Please note that charge limits are in effect on most credit card transactions, and hotel bills need to be settled every few days.

18. Visas:

Visas are required for entry into Mozambique, and Embassy Maputo urges travelers to have them prior to traveling. Travelers arriving from a country without a Mozambican embassy can get visas at the airport or land border entry points for USD 20 or 500,000 meticaís. Those arriving from a country with a Mozambican embassy can obtain visas at the airport or land border entry points for USD 25. Diplomatic visitors without visas will have their passports held pending processing of a visa, which requires Embassy Maputo to process a diplomatic note.

19. Security/Threat Assessment:

The biggest threat facing U.S. citizens visiting Mozambique is crime. The State Department has designated Mozambique a critical-threat post for crime. Street crime and vehicle hijackings are common and can be violent. Visitors must be vigilant when out in public areas, and should not display jewelry or other items of high value. Visitors should avoid carrying backpacks or purses, as these can draw unwanted attention of would-be muggers. Isolated areas, such as along the Marginal (the area along the sea), should be avoided as joggers and pedestrians have been mugged frequently, even during daylight hours.

There are no known terrorist groups active in Mozambique and

no current indications that U.S. citizens are being targeted by terrorist organizations.

The police are poorly paid, poorly equipped, and lack the professionalism that U.S. citizens are accustomed to in the United States. Visitors requiring emergency assistance should not rely on local emergency services, but should contact the Marine Security Guard at Post One at 21-49-07-23. Mozambican law requires that all persons carry an identity document, such as a passport, when out in public, and produce it if requested by police. A copy of passport identity and visa pages is acceptable. There are certain areas in the city of Maputo where pedestrian traffic is prohibited, e.g., in front of the presidential offices located north of the Hotel Polana on the seaside of Avenida Julius Nyerere.

Overland travel after dark is extremely dangerous due to poor road conditions, lack of emergency services, and the increased potential for vehicle high-jacking. Official Americans serving in Mozambique are prohibited from overland travel outside city limits during the hours of darkness.

TDY visitors spending more than two work days in Mozambique must schedule a security briefing with the Regional Security Officer.

10. Airport Departure Tax:

There is an airport departure tax, payable only in cash in U.S. dollars or in meticaïs, of USD 20 or its equivalent for long-distance international flights and USD 20 or its equivalent for regional flights (those within Southern Africa). A domestic departure tax of 55,000 meticaïs is levied.

11. Transiting Johannesburg Airport:

Please be aware that baggage security is a significant problem at the Johannesburg airport. Many items have been stolen from checked bags, including the checked bags themselves. The items stolen most often are electronics (including I-Pods, digital cameras/cameras, and alarm clocks), toiletries (such as soap, shaving kits and cologne) and shoes (especially expensive running/athletic shoes). A

LOCKED BAG DOES NOT ENSURE SECURITY - please put items such as these in your carry-on baggage. One security measure that seems to meet with some success is to have your luggage stretch-wrapped at your point of departure. The stretch-wrapping makes it more difficult for the thieves to gain access to your luggage. Be aware that flights between Johannesburg and Maputo are often serviced by a small plane with little space for carry-on luggage. This may require passengers to check their larger carry-on items. Please ensure your valuables are kept in a bag small enough to carry on your lap to keep them with you at all times. We take this problem very seriously and are doing what we can to help aid a solution. In brief, please:

- Leave behind irreplaceable valuables;
- Always lock your bags;
- Have your luggage stretch-wrapped when possible;
- Keep your valuables with you in a small carry-on.

12. Airline Reservations:

Changing airline tickets after arriving in Maputo is often difficult. Passenger reservations on all airlines can be changed through the national airline and/or travel agents in South Africa, but reissuing tickets have proven difficult. Travelers should be sure to confirm onward flight reservations.

13. Health:

Travelers are advised that chloroquine-resistant malaria is present in Mozambique. The most recent guidance from the Department of State Medical Office recommends weekly use of mefloquine as the drug of choice for malaria prophylaxis in chloroquine-resistant areas. Mefloquine must be started one to two weeks before arriving at post. Daily doxycycline is an alternative regimen. Doxycycline must be started three days before arriving at post. Both malaria prophylaxis medications must be continued for four weeks after departing post.

DUDLEY